

back to the start by Val-Creative

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Genre: Friendship, Romance

Language: English

Characters: Eleven/Jane H., Joyce B., Mike W.

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Summary: After waiting longer than usual to see her boyfriend, El can't find Mike anywhere in Hawkins. She begins to get a little frantic.

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It's been so lonely.

El crosses out each day on her NASA space-printed calendar, impatient, bouncing on her heels. Same time every day. Five pm. Thirty minutes until Jonathan serves dinner for him and Will and El. Five forty five, Jonathan takes his keys, driving to his job out of town. She crosses out each day fervently until the three-day weekend of April 11th.

As soon as Joyce parks outside the Wheeler household, El leaps out. She bangs on it, pressing for doorbell and perking up when a deeply irritated Ted Wheeler in a bathrobe answers. He doesn't seem to recognize El, gurgle-sipping from his coffee mug.

"I haven't seen him," he drones. "If you do, tell him to come straight home. We have family dinner tonight."

Ted slams the front door in El's face promptly. She flinches a little , and then narrows her eyes. Where is Mike? El rushes back to Joyce's car, fishing out her walkie and calling for Lucas. Or Max. Or anyone in range. Nobody answers her.

"Maybe they're busy," Joyce speaks up, trying to be helpful — but El's stomach feels *funny*. Like it's full of hot and cold liquid.

There's no sign of Mike at The Palace, or Forrest Hills Park, or the high school. The quarry has been drained. Bradley's Big Buy has different free food stands inside and no more Eggos. Hawk and Royal Furniture Co. and Melvald's General Store out of business. El tiptoes into the Hawkin's public library, whispering frantically for Mike, dodging the watchful eye of Ms. Marissa.

More searching, more of El's stomach feels queasy.

She returns to the Wheeler household, leaving Joyce to circle back to

Mulberry Street and pick up some fast food. El tries the door-handle, finding it jiggling loose. Holly races by El in the corridor, waving cheerfully and giggling, stomping up the staircase.

El sneaks into the kitchen for the basement door, as Karen yells for Holly, chasing after her daughter.

Right along the back-corner, when she jumps down on the final step, there's a tent. El stares in amazement as it glows, pulsing rapidly and randomly. Like there's a person inside signaling for her attention. El approaches cautiously, drawing back the blanket. Her stomach dissolves, fluttering happily, when Mike pokes his head out, grinning up at her.

"Mike!" El shrieks, grinning too, lurching forward and tackling him onto the rug. Their arms and legs flailing.

"Oof—ahaha!" Mike chuckles, helping them up. "Jeez, El! I thought you were gonna check here first!"

"You were down here? Waiting?"

"Two hours and a half. No joke. I was about to give up and find you myself." Mike's expression goes sullen when El bites her lower lip. Her grin vanishing. "Did... did I mess up or something? I really thought you would have figured it out. Are you mad?"

El shakes her head after a long, weighed moment, closing the distance and hugging Mike tightly.

"No," she whispers.

No.

She's not lonely anymore.

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Stranger Things isn't mine. Requested by Emotional Peep (FFN): "el

missing Mike in her new out of town home and Mike surprising her for a day back in Hawkins, super sad but super cute." Hope you enjoy it! And any Mileven fan reading this! Any comments/thoughts are deeply appreciated!

((Want a request for Stranger Things? I'm doing 100-500 word drabbles of any friendship or romantic ship + any prompt until I feel like quitting. Rules: you need to comment here and provide a friendship or romantic ship and prompt. Please do not ask for anything with Billy Hargrove. Thank you. The only requests I'll be looking at is if you ALSO commented about the fic you just read as well. It's only fair. You came to this fic to read it and me doing something for you later on is a sweet bonus!))